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Tough choices

Parents making hard decisions over whether to send their kids back to school in September

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

Aarica Hurl feels anxious, scared, and says she has "mom guilt for sure."

Her four-year-old already had her hairstyle and outfit picked out for her first day of school, and Hurl said, "I feel like I took away that sparkle a little," after making the decision that both her daughter, who is starting junior kindergarten and 11-year-old son, who becomes a Grade 6 student at Archie Stouffer Elementary School this year, will stay home from school during the time of global pandemic.

Hurl is a parent in one of hundreds of families in Haliburton County deciding whether their kids will attend school in-person, enroll in school for an at-home learning program, or pursue another private option to reduce the risks of spreading COVID-19.

On July 30, the Ford government announced their much-anticipated return-to-school plan, which called for elementary schools to reopen province-wide with in-class instruction five days a week, and secondary schools with lower risk to reopen with a normal daily schedule. Students from Grade 4 to 12 and school staff are required to wear masks, while masks for students in younger

see BACK page 11



Sizzling summer business

Haliburton's Dustyn McCready-DeBruin has been enjoying business this summer, receiving regular work through his company, Dusty Dives. McCready-DeBruin has been busier than last year, retrieving people's personal possessions from lakes in the Highlands and Muskoka. See story on page 15. /DARREN LUM Staff

Pandemic puts pressure on mental health

JENN WATT

Editor

The coronavirus pandemic has changed nearly every facet of our daily lives, disrupting routines and limiting contact with loved ones, introducing financial pressures and heightening anxiety about our health and that of others.

Mental health professionals serving the Haliburton Highlands say they've seen an increase in visits and that clients are feeling the weight of five months of COVID-19 pressure – but also that there are effective techniques and community supports that can help.

"The volume of inquiries has definitely

ing the weight of five months of COVID-19 pressure – but also that there are effective techniques and community supports that can help.

"The volume of inquiries has definitely

see COVID-19 page 4

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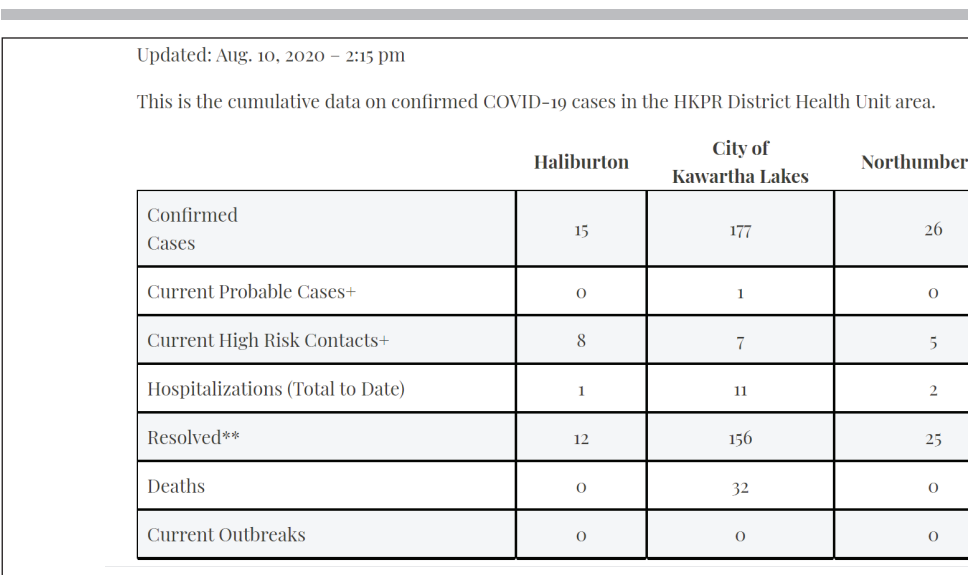


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Holding shovels, MPP Laurie Scott, from left at front, MP Jamie Schmale, Rotary Club of Haliburton president Ted Brandon and Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts joined Haliburton Rotarians, township staff and councillors for an official ground breaking ceremony for the new welcome centre in Haliburton's Head Lake Park on Wednesday, Aug. 5. The facility has an estimated budget of \$450,000. There is \$75,000 from the Rotary Club, \$375,000 from the Federal government through its Canadian Experiences Fund, and council will cover any contingencies. It is expected to be completed in spring 2021. /DARREN LUN Staff

This is the cumulative data on confirmed COVID-19 cases in the HKPR District Health Unit area.

	Haliburton	City of Kawartha Lakes	Northumberland	HKPRDHU
Confirmed Cases	15	177	26	218
Current Probable Cases+	0	1	0	1
Current High Risk Contacts+	8	7	5	20
Hospitalizations (Total to Date)	1	11	2	14
Resolved**	12	156	25	193
Deaths	0	32	0	32
Current Outbreaks	0	0	0	0

A report of a second hospitalization related to COVID- counts for COVID-19.”

On Aug. 5 at 12:25 p.m., the health unit updated cumulative data on confirmed COVID-19 cases in the region that included a second hospitalization, the county's first hospitalization since April. On Aug. 7 at 12:45 p.m., that information was corrected in the health unit's report, noting "One case has been removed, as the case was not hospitalized for COVID-19 treatment."

“...the health unit was notified of a positive lab result for an individual in hospital in Haliburton County. However, upon further investigation and follow-up, the confirmed case no longer meets the criteria for a ‘hospitalized case of COVID-19.’ This is now reflected in today’s COVID-19 case count for the health unit region,” he wrote in an email.

"If a local resident goes to hospital for COVID-19 symptoms in Haliburton County, Northumberland County or the City of Kawartha Lakes, he/she is included in the hospitalized case count for the HKPR region. This remains the same, even if the person is transferred to another hospital in a different part of Ontario.

BARRY MISCHIO CONTRACTING

Currently there are three Haliburton County residents who have tested positive for COVID-19, with 12 previous cases reported to be resolved. Three high-risk contacts – those being asymptomatic individuals who are known to have been in contact with a confirmed or probable case – were reported on Aug. 5, updated to seven high-risk contacts on Aug. 7 and then eight on Aug. 10.

“Unfortunately, the HKPR District Health Unit cannot provide more details about the latest COVID-19 case in Haliburton County,” said Eekhof. “We have a legal responsibility to protect personal health information that we collect under various pieces of legislation such as the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Although it may seem that our geographic area has a large enough population to make it impossible to identify an individual, we essentially cover three counties comprised of small towns and villages... and it could be very easy to identify someone who tests positive. This is especially true in Haliburton County, which is the smallest of the three municipalities serviced by the Health Unit.”

While an epidemiological report offers the distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases by age and gender throughout the health unit's region, the health unit will not break down the local cases.

City of Kawartha Lakes has reported 177 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 11 hospitalizations in total and 156 cases resolved, while Northumberland has reported 26 cases of COVID-19, with two hospitalizations in total and 25 cases resolved. The region has seen 218 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since reporting began in March.

~ Staff



Terry Sullivan, a watercolour and acrylic artist, was a guest at Charlene McConnell's studio during Tour de Forest, which took place Aug. 1 and 2 across Haliburton County.



Art lovers tour the Highlands

Eagle Lake potter Charlene McConnell stands with her work during Tour de Forest summer studio tour. McConnell works in stoneware and porcelain to create her pieces, which can be found at Purple Door Studio. The annual studio tour, which was held Aug. 1 and 2 this year, observed COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safety of the artists and visitors. /HUW MORGAN Special to the Echo



Artist Laurie O'Reilly stands with her artwork at her studio on Eagle Lake Road. O'Reilly is a contemporary artist working in acrylic, encaustic, sculpture and other media.

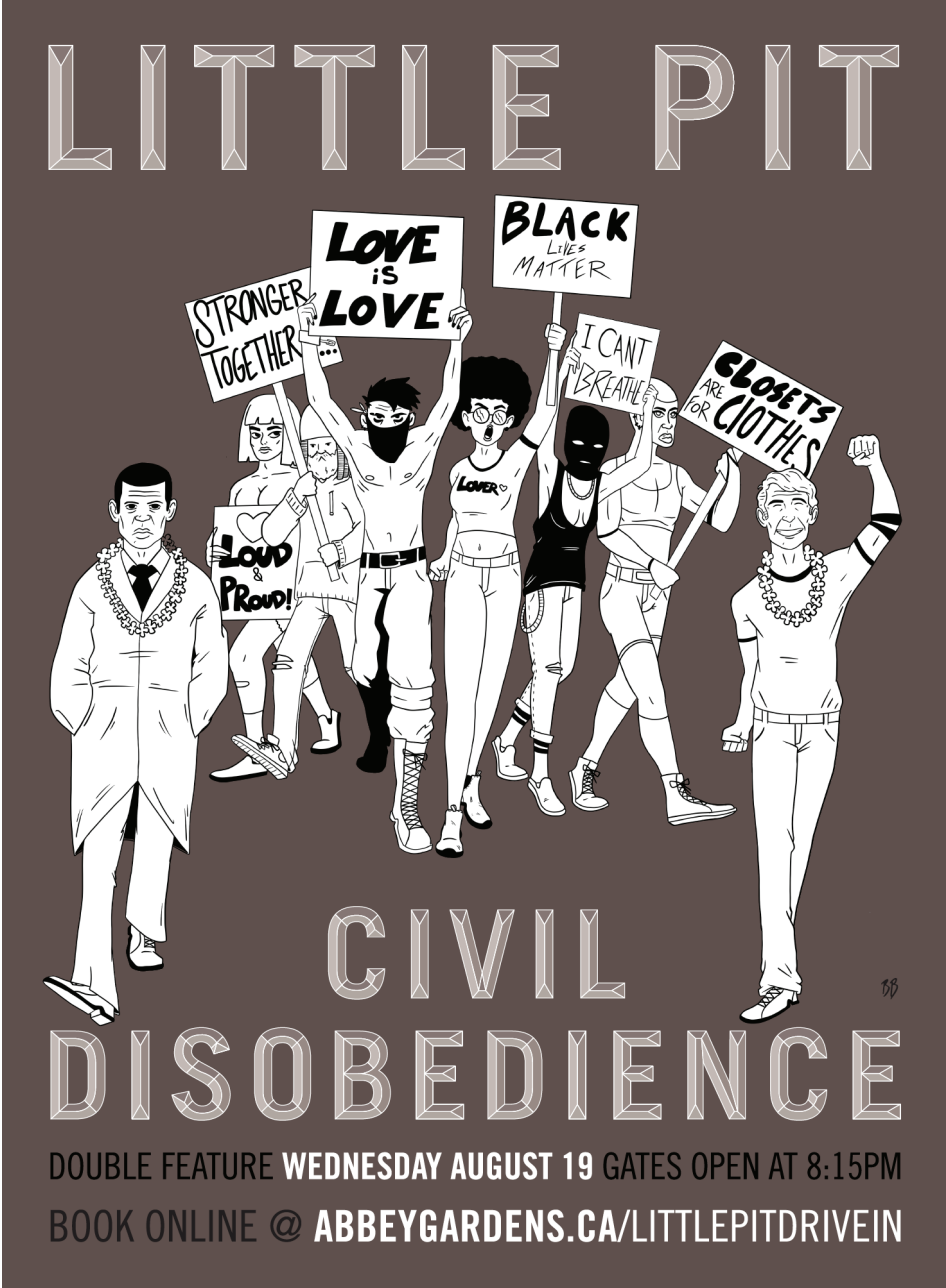


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COVID-19 may worsen existing mental health conditions

from page 1

increased since May after dropping off dramatically in March and April," said Rebecca Brownell, a registered marriage and family therapist and registered psychotherapist with an office at the Colborne Street Clinic in Orillia. "...I think there are many couples struggling with having to manage parenting at home all day together, figuring out a new routine re: childcare and the management of household tasks; creating healthy boundaries around working from home and managing stress. ... Suddenly people's routines have been thrown off."

Alone time has suffered, she said, with adults working from home together or potentially staying home if they've lost their jobs due to the economic downturn.

"Many are reporting missing going out to work and missing the social interactions with their co-workers. Many derive a sense of purpose and competence from their work and enjoy getting positive feedback from colleagues. Many are missing the banter around the water cooler!" she said.

Private clinician and registered social service worker Nancy Brownsberger, who offers non-therapeutic based support and counselling through Grow Optimism, also saw numbers drop when the pandemic first arrived.

"Initially, my practice became very quiet," she said, "As did the world. As we all took a respective knee to the virus, I believe that most of us recoiled in absolute shock and disbelief as well as fear. I know I certainly did. About a month into the shut-down I began to receive requests for mental health support from individuals who found they were struggling with navigating the current world and their

new realities."

A global pandemic is something most alive today have never lived through before, and the reality of the health threats and the necessary precautions to be taken naturally lead to uncertainty and sometimes to fear.

"The term 'unprecedented times' is almost an understatement to the realities that we faced individually and on a global scale," Brownsberger said. "A virus, that is highly contagious, with no known cure, is sweeping the globe and has the possibility of killing us in an extremely terrifying way – namely, alone, in a hospital, on a ventilator."

Nicole Mee, a registered psychotherapist who runs Forest Lane Counselling, said combining the realities of the pandemic with life events can intensify issues.

"The stressors may have always been there, but the pandemic has amplified it for some. For others it is mainly related to societal norms and changes in routine. I think as a whole society we are seeing an ever-changing and fast-moving shift in the way we operate. People do not always adapt well to change in 'normal times' but when it is at a global level and happens rapidly it can create high anxiety and stress for people."

The stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic can also aggravate pre-existing mental health conditions, leading to increased anxiety and depression in some.

"People with histories of trauma are especially vulnerable to this kind of stress as it is reminiscent of a time in their lives when they didn't feel safe and secure and did not have a sense of certainty about their future," Brownell explained. "People who have a history of depression and anxiety are also more vulnerable as the

brain attempts to deal with a new stressor and uncertainty. I have noticed that there is an increase in prescribed medications such as benzodiazepines for anxiety and antidepressants for depression."

Brownell said that isolation is especially hard on one's mental health: "Many are feeling lonely and disconnected. We are social beings, craving and needing touch and closeness. Teens are struggling immensely with a disconnect from friends. And many adults have not been able to hold their elderly parents in nursing homes. This has been devastating to many of my clients."

Brownsberger pointed out that while for some, the pandemic has brought people together to get through a difficult time, not everyone was surrounded by supportive family and friends – physically or virtually.

"[D]uring the first two months of the virus, there was a meme on social media that went something like this 'we may all be in the same storm, but we are not in the same boat'. To me, this was a perfect example of individual experience – meaning, if you have mental illness or susceptibility to feeling anxious or depressed, your boat might more easily fill with water and tip over," she said. "And that is where, I believe, we began to hear and see divisiveness, comparative suffering."

Brownsberger said she worries that when people are afraid, there can be an impulse to label fellow humans as "the other," leading to anger, divisiveness and sometimes hate.

"And when we are in a state of fear or anxiety, with little ability to address it or find strategies to cope with it in a healthy way, it can affect our central nervous systems and increase our likelihood for an increase in previously diagnosed mental illness symptoms like anxiety (fear of what might happen or lack of control about what is happening), depression (feelings of sadness, grief and loss about what is happening)," she said.

Finding hope and help

One strategy to cope when the world is filled with uncertainty and conflict is to focus on the joys in one's life. Mee said she works with clients to look for silver linings such as having more time with family, returning to a favourite hobby, or the chance to adopt a slower pace.

"Self-care is something that I focus on," Mee said. "We need to take care of ourselves and our minds before we can tackle more difficult situations. A question I often ask is, 'What do you do for you that brings you joy?'" That may be talking to friends on the phone, playing cards with a family member, or listening to music, for example.

Her suggestions for those finding the pandemic overwhelming: take breaks from social media and news if it's creating anxiety, worry, anger and frustration; find a hobby to keep busy that brings you joy; take care of your body by getting plenty of sleep, eating healthful foods, practising mindfulness, and doing stretches or other exercises; getting outside; and staying connected with friends and family.

Brownell also advocates taking breaks from overly intense news stories. "The part of our brain that alerts us to dangers is called the amygdala. When we listen to the news our amygdalas are alerted to danger in our lives and increase anxiety and a sense of not being safe. This puts

our brains in a fight or flight response and a hyper-aroused state making it difficult to relax and have a positive mindset."

Establishing a plan and creating new routines in your life can help,

"like getting up at the same time of day, having family meals together, having a game night, having evening walks together, or just debriefing the day in a hot tub!" she said.

Being able to vent your frustrations and to vocalize how you're feeling can help to put things in perspective. Brownsberger said sometimes having a conversation with a health professional can bring clarity.

"Having the opportunity to speak with a mental health professional, social worker, psychologist, therapist, psychiatrist, counsellor, spiritual advisor during times of stress allows us to vocalize some of these unhelpful thoughts and mistaken beliefs, and begin to unravel them which allows us to gain clarity during difficult times in our lives," she said.

Being compassionate and kind is also of utmost importance not just for one's personal mental state, but to create a community environment that fosters cohesion and well-being.

"What we don't need in the midst of struggle (remembering that we are all struggling) is to be shamed, blamed or judged for our actions. And we are all 100 per cent responsible for how we choose to behave," Brownsberger said. "I have said it so many times, to so many clients and groups over the past four months – ask yourself this 'how do I choose to show up to this and how do I want to be remembered for those choices?'"

She said people should reach out when they need help, but also that friends should "reach in" when they see someone struggling: "And when we reach in, with compassion, kindness and a little fear of having a difficult conversation, we can encourage them to get the help they might need to assist them with their current struggles."

Seeking professional help

You may need to seek help from a mental health professional when you no longer feel that you are coping or managing well, Mee said. "I recommend this when feelings of being overwhelmed, sadness or heightened anxiety make it difficult for them to enjoy the things they used to enjoy in life. In addition, I also recommend this, when someone just wants a safe, non-judgemental, confidential space to talk about what is going on in his or her world. Sometimes just talking to a caring professional can be exactly what you need to work through the thoughts and feelings you may be experiencing," she said.

If you are having suicidal thoughts, it's important to get in touch with your health-care provider immediately.

Resources that can help

- Mental Health Services - Haliburton Highlands Health Services 705-286-4575
- Four County Crisis - 1-866-995-9933 (24-hour free crisis support)
- haliburtoncares.ca - a website offering help during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Families 705-457-5345 (after hours crisis: 1-866-995-9933)
- Local food banks and SIRCH Community Services free meals
- Private mental health practitioners and psychiatric supports - speak with your primary care physician

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School board asks parents to decide between in-school or remote learning

JENN WATT

Editor

Information about a pre-registration process went out to parents and guardians last week asking whether they intend to enrol their children full time in school or continue with remote learning at home in September.

Part of the planning process for Trillium Lakelands District School Board, the information will help allocate staff, schedule buses and arrange classroom space with new protocols in place to prevent the spread of the coronavirus when school starts.

On July 30, the Ministry of Education announced that students would return to their classrooms this fall, with new safety measures in place, including mandatory masks for those in Grade 4 and older, enhanced cleaning regimens, physical distancing and an emphasis on hand washing.

TLDSB director of education Wes Hahn gave a verbal report to the board of trustees at their meeting held online Aug. 4.

Hahn, who took over the position from Larry Hope on Aug. 1, said planning for the fall will be made easier when TLDSB knows how many students will be returning and how many will learn from home.

"We need to know that information because it helps us staff and organize the building properly and to make sure that we have situations set up for the remote learning," he said during the meeting.

Those who decide to keep their children home will be able to opt-in to in-school learning later, but administrators are still working on how frequently that can happen.

Because COVID-19 is easily spread through close contact between people and can be transmitted by touching shared surfaces, every part of a student's typical day at school must be examined and in many cases modified. Movement in the building needs to change, with staggered break times, for example. Use of shared spaces such as the cafeteria will pose new challenges. Ready access to sanitizer, paper towels and hand-washing stations needs to be assured.

Hahn said students who are close by will be encouraged to walk or cycle to school when possible. Some parents may choose to drive their children. Those taking the bus who are in Grade 4 to 12 must wear a face mask and buses will be regularly cleaned.

Work is currently underway to design bus routes to have as little intermixing of

kids as possible.

Asked by trustee Judy Saunders about how seating arrangements are being made, superintendent of business Tim Ellis said children will be told where they should sit to keep groups of students together.

"... we would be looking at setting up sections of the bus for particular students or particular schools to limit that contact," Ellis said. "And I think it'll be give and take with the operators, but ideally we're going to do things like fill from the back to the front and those types of things so that we can minimize the contact between children. But because we're talking about cohorting, we're going to try to keep the appropriate children at the school base together on the bus."

In elementary schools, students will be in class all day with their homeroom teacher, though there may be interaction with other teachers, but they won't be mixing with students throughout the building.

"They'll be staying together in that group throughout the day and teachers will interact with them in different ways throughout the day to make sure they get their full course load and full requirement in elementary," Hahn said.

At secondary schools, TLDSB is looking at instituting a "quadmaster" model, with students at school all day, studying one subject in the morning and another in the afternoon, earning two credits at a time.

"Again, that's to manage the course load and to keep it manageable," Hahn said.

Trustee Gary Brohman, who represents Haliburton County and spent much of his career prior to retirement as principal of Haliburton Highlands Secondary School, asked what measures would be in place to keep everyone attentive, given the time in class would be double the regular classroom time (from 75 minutes of instruction to 150).

Superintendent of learning Katherine McIver responded that breaks would be interspersed throughout, while ensuring that cohorts of students didn't share the same break times.

Keeping students and staff from interacting with too many people was a common refrain throughout the discussion at the meeting, and Hahn said that unfortunately some parts of school life that will need to change to ensure safety.

Prohibiting visitors and volunteers is one such change.

"We're not used to doing that," Hahn said. "We like our schools to be open to everyone and be welcoming, but you can imagine in these situations that we can't

[allow visitors] to make sure we keep our schools as safe as possible.

Exceptions would be made in emergency situations, but temporarily restricting volunteers means some programs won't run in the same way they normally would. In particular, concern was expressed about student nutrition programs, in Haliburton County this program is delivered through the volunteer organization Food for Kids.

Asked by student trustee Kaylee Kelly what the board planned to do to distribute food to students, Hahn said they were looking at alternative delivery methods.

"We're trying to limit the amount of volunteers or visitors into the building, so what we can do from a school point of view [is] to support single-serving portions or have things available that can be brought to the school," Hahn said. "People don't enter, but we're able to distribute them within the building. We're looking at all of these possible scenarios to make sure we have that nutritional breakfast support for students. It's a difficult one. We don't want to take that away from students and families that really rely on that. We'll do our best."

Brohman followed up, reiterating how important the food programs were and urging administration to give it as much effort as possible.

"I really ... hope all heads can come together for nutrition, Food for Kids, breakfast programs," he said. "... We must, must support these vulnerable, vulnerable kids. We preach 'feed all four,' we must act on 'feed all four' and one of the greatest things this board is known for are our breakfast programs in all three counties. As much time as you put into trans-

portation, put into nutrition programs."

("Feed all four" is a concept created in TLDSB that a person's body, mind, spirit and emotions must be taken care of to imbue a sense of well-being and to foster student achievement.)

Aaron Walker, coordinator of the Food for Kids program in Haliburton County, told the *Echo* that 1,700 students access the program. He said he hadn't yet heard about proposed modifications of how the program is delivered. He said volunteers would probably feel safer if food was prepared off-site, but it would reduce the valuable human interaction they get from the experience.

TLDSB trustees also heard at the meeting that many extracurricular activities and clubs will be cancelled this fall, unless they can be delivered virtually.

"There may be situations that we have to take into consideration that could happen because the physical distancing can be maintained, but that close interaction of certain sports or clubs that may involve students coming in contact, we're not prepared to put people at risk right now," Hahn said.

However, phys-ed and other electives such as drama will still be offered, complying with ministry expectations that a full offering of courses and credits be available. Hahn said those classes may look different to ensure safety.

McIver pointed out that for many students, these elective courses are the ones they enjoy most, and allowing them to go forward – in a modified fashion – would keep those students engaged.

Members of the public can listen to board meetings online, by going to tldsbc.ca.

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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

Mental toll

OVER THE LAST five months, since the pandemic really hit Canada in a big way, we've become increasingly aware of the toll the pandemic is taking on mental health.

We can see it in the news stories we read of mask protests and anti-science vitriol, while watching our Facebook feeds where people wage word-wars with each other over how best to keep the virus at bay and who is to blame; and from our mental health providers, who say they're hearing from clients that COVID-19 has injected new pressures into their lives.

The Canadian Mental Health Association released national survey results at the end of June that showed "in the thick of the pandemic in May, this survey found that one in 20 Canadians (six per cent) had recently experienced thoughts or feelings of suicide as a result of the pandemic."

For those who already had mental health issues prior to the pandemic, the survey found they were twice as likely to report their mental health had declined (59 per cent) and of this group, only two per cent said they were accessing in-person mental health care, with 14 per cent saying they had received virtual mental health care.

Speaking with local mental health care providers for the story in this week's *Echo*, it's apparent

that those who are seeking help are finding the world we live in today – the so-called "new normal" – distressing.

People are telling their therapists that they're worried about their finances and job loss. They are concerned for their own health when they leave the house, and for that of their loved ones. Some feel isolated and are devastated that they haven't had ready access to their family members in long-term care. Some feel

crowded by the other people in their homes, that they don't have enough space.

With the reopening of schools about a month away, there is now new strain on parents, who must make the difficult decision of whether or not to send their children to school during a pandemic.

We're all floating in uncertainty, unsure of

when things will get back to normal, or if they ever will.

For some of us, these stressors are jeopardizing our mental health, and when that happens, it's important to seek help. Both public and private options are available for those looking for counselling – most doctors and nurse practitioners have a comprehensive list they can give you – and crisis services are there 24 hours a day.

One place to start is haliburtoncares.ca – click on "mental health" to get a list of all the public services, or call Mental Health Services at 705-286-4575.



jenn
watt

Editorial



Waves of summer on Head Lake

by Darren Lum

Our county, the refuge

WE ARE ALL trying: to get out, to feel inspired, to connect, to be healthy and safe, to look after ourselves.

Four couples drove to Haliburton from Mississauga on the Saturday morning of the August long weekend to go on a tour of the Haliburton Sculpture Forest that they had booked. My husband, Jim, and I were their tour leaders. They arrived in four separate vehicles, all wearing their masks, so excited. We learned they were best friends who hadn't been together since early March. They had all been social and physical distancing, working at home and doing all the right things to keep themselves, and their families and friends healthy and safe.

The Sculpture Forest was the first time they were together in person since March. They had never been to Haliburton before and so it was a big adventure in many ways for them. They were so happy to be together and the first thing they commented on was how they could smell the pine trees when they got into the county. They loved how fresh the air was. As we headed out on the tour it was evident that they were keen. They loved every sculpture and we spent a lot of time at each one.

We had beautiful conversations about each sculpture and the artist. Some of the sculptures inspired us to talk about COVID. When words like endurance and hope and resilience came up it opened the door for conversations about what they have been experiencing and what they hoped for themselves and their kids. Repeatedly they said how magical the experience was, how beautiful the area is, how happy they felt.

One of the men told Jim that he felt like the forest was medicinal. As we walked we learned that the four women had met at university in the Philippines and they and their husbands had come to live in Canada. Several of them have relatives living in Florida and New York City and they talked about that. They talked about their lives in the city and what it has been like to be isolated. And they caught up with each other as we walked.

So much laughter and joy at being together again. It was so beautiful to be a part of. Jim and I felt very honoured that they trusted us to come and do the tour. I asked one woman how they found out about the Sculpture Forest and she said they found it online and it had excellent reviews that they trusted it would be a safe place to go. They brought a picnic lunch with them and

planned to eat in Glebe Park and then head back home.

The whole experience made me think about how our county is a place of refuge. People come here to relax, to connect with family and friends and nature, to be in beauty, to get out of their busy lives and to feel inspired. Those of us who live here full time hold the space for day visitors, cottagers and family and friends who visit. We owe a huge thanks to ourselves, and everyone who is working to serve and support the visitors.

It takes an entire community to create the space that people can rest into. I know these four couples appreciated being able to have a safe and inspiring experience. I think we all want to feel that way when we leave our homes to go on an adventure in these times.

Tales from
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Green meadow

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points of view

Skunk roulette

LATELY, AND THROUGH no fault of my own, I have been running into skunks. Or, to be more accurate, running away from skunks. I mention this to dispel any ugly rumours that suggest I have taken up jogging. That kind of thing that can ruin a man's reputation.

The fact of the matter is I have had three close encounters with skunks – likely the same one – over the last week or two. And, in all cases, a quick strategic retreat de-escalated the tension. I am referring, of course, to the tension that would have happened had I walked into the house and announced I have been sprayed – especially if she never noticed.

Let me begin by saying I have nothing but the highest admiration for skunks in general. For here is an animal that commands respect and fear just by the scent they put out. They don't trash talk anyone, nor do they have to get physical to win an argument. All they have to do is turn their backs to the threatening party and the situation quickly resolves itself. Coincidentally, this is also the same reason I hold a couple of my fishing buddies in such high regard.

But – and I hate to admit this – I'm beginning to think skunks are a young man's game.

I know this because when I was younger, growing up in Scarborough, skunks were merely a part of the landscape. It was not a summer night without the sweet smell of skunk wafting



steve
galea

Loon Tales

through the air, and a stroll in the dark under the streetlights was not complete unless you watched a gang of skunks coming towards you, using the same sidewalk you were on. Often, we'd pass each other fairly close and nod politely at each other – both sadly knowing that each of our mothers would not approve of a friendship with the other.

Maybe, I'm remembering things a little too fondly but I always had the feeling that our local skunks held me and many of my childhood friends in the same high regard as we held them. If so, this was because they realized that they and ten-year-old boys had a lot in common. Primarily, we did not smell all that much different. Heck, in many cases, we were arguably a bit more pungent.

As a result, we maintained a cordial relationship with the neighbourhood skunks and there was a time I seriously considered collecting skunk spray and bottling it as a cologne. Quite frankly, it would have been less eye-watering than the stuff the older kids were wearing at the time.

Unfortunately, as you get up there in years, you leave behind many of the wonders of youth, skunks being one of them.

That is a shame because skunks have many admirable qualities that we humans would do well to emulate at times like these – not the least of which is a highly evolved talent for teaching social distancing. Better yet, if you can get one to live under your shed, you won't have to mow the lawn all summer, so clearly they make great neighbours too.

The downside of skunks is that every encounter is part of a very risky roulette game. Five out of six times, they won't bother you at all. It is the sixth time, however, that you need to worry about.

But that's only because our colognes have gotten so much better.



pic of the past

Back in the 1950s, the Brown family spent part of their summers as guests at Wigamog Inn, where they befriended the Robertsons, who owned the Lake Kashagawigamog resort. In this photo, linked arm in arm, are Vicki Brown, Keith Robertson and his sister Linda. Our thanks to Vicki Brown, who is now married into the Markle family, for sharing the photo with us. The Markles have had a cottage on Spruce Lake since 1938.

letters to the editor

Kindness of strangers

To the Editor,

This is a story about how good people still do exist.

I was brought to Haliburton Hospital on Saturday, Aug. 1, by my daughter and husband for an anaphylaxis reaction to an insect sting. I was admitted immediately and put on I/V and a heart monitor. Because of the severity of the allergic reaction and because of COVID-19 protocol, my family was not allowed to be with me. They were told I would be there for at least four hours.

They went to Haliburton to an outdoor patio called Maple Avenue for food and drinks. A man at the next table, sitting by himself, obviously overheard my husband and daughter's worries

about me. The man left and when my husband asked for the bill, the waitress (Alexis) said: "The man at the next table beside you paid for your meals. When asked if he knew them, the man said no, but felt they were having a bad day." I don't know if this message will ever reach this wonderful man, but if it does, I want to say thank you for your kindness. Your gesture gave a little bright light in an otherwise dark and scary time for my family.

I also want to say thank you for the wonderful care I received at Haliburton Hospital, the staff were compassionate and attentive.

Carole Averill
Buckhorn

Fun Fair and storytime in the park

The Haliburton and District Lions are very excited to bring a fun free event to children and families! It's our Stories in the Park Fun Fair! Join us at Head Lake Park on Wednesday, Aug. 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for games such as bean bag toss, giant pick up sticks, putt about and more. Each child will receive a new book to take home; enjoy a hot dog, popcorn and juice box and will be invited to sit at the story tree to hear a story. We are pleased that local children's author, Marie Gage will be at the story tree to meet the children and share a story.

I know that as you are reading all this, you are thinking about COVID-19 and how it will all work. Our commitment to you is that we have thoroughly planned this event to include social distancing; disinfecting every item a child touches before it is used by another child; and, ensuring that all COVID-19 Phase 3 reo-

pening protocols, as well as the Municipality of Dysart et al park protocols, are in place and will be followed at all times.

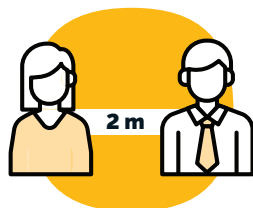
The COVID-19 pandemic has been a sad and tragic time for so many. The Haliburton Lions decided to have this event as a way to thank our children for the part they have played to keep safe and well and also to provide them with a little fun break as they prepare to go back to school or daycare.

Finally, if you have any questions or would like more details or would like to volunteer to help, please go to our website: haliburtonlions.com or contact me at gatesstelter@gmail.com or 705-455-2772.

We will be smiling behind our masks and we look forward to seeing you and your children at Stories in the Park Fun Fair on Aug. 26!

Submitted by Gail Stelter

As more businesses and services reopen, we must all continue our efforts to protect each other.



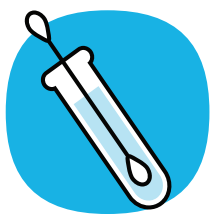
Continue to practice physical distancing, stay two metres apart even in gatherings.



Wear a face covering where physical distancing is a challenge or where required.



Continue to **wash hands frequently.**



Get tested if you are worried you may have COVID-19, or have been exposed to the virus.

**Inside or out, stay safe.
Save lives.**

Visit ontario.ca/coronavirus
Paid for by the Government of Ontario

Ontario

Summer speaker on Zoom Aug. 13

Environment Haliburton! will present a virtual Summer Speaker event on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 7 p.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the risks associated with our increasing dependence on global supply chains for everything from essential personal protective equipment to critical food supplies. The shutting down of large segments of the economy has also pushed many small, local businesses to the brink of bankruptcy.

Are there other ways to organize our economy to reduce future vulnerabilities to pandemics and other disruptions while building local economies that privilege social and environmental values as much, if not more, than profit?

Our 2020 (Virtual) Summer Speaker event is meant to help start a conversation in Haliburton County about building a more resilient, ecologically-conscious, post-pandemic economy that works for everyone, not just Amazon.

Please join us on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 7 p.m. for a Zoom presentation by Russ Christianson, a well-respected cooperative developer from Campbellford, Ont., who has helped launch more than 200 co-



Russ Christianson, a well-respected cooperative developer from Campbellford, Ont.

operatives, with a 70 per cent success rate.

Russ not only talks the talk, but has a history direct local involvement in his own community, serving as the founding president of the Campbellford/Seymour Community Foundation and the Aron Theatre Co-operative.

Please register for this event on the EH! website at www.environment-haliburton.org.

*Submitted by
Environment Haliburton*



Drive thru service

Cars lined up down Park Street to go through the beef on a bun drive thru in Haliburton on Aug. 5. More than 400 people bought one of the Rotary Club of Haliburton's sandwiches, which were a fundraiser for the club's community initiatives. /JENN WATT Staff



Rotary car winner announced

Judy Neimann was this year's winner of \$30,000 in the Rotary Club of Haliburton car draw. Her name was pulled from the raffle drum on Aug. 5 by Rotarians Maureen O'Hara and Ted Brandon outside the *Echo* office. Neimann had the choice of the cash or a new Camaro. /Photo submitted

Nephew pens book about pilot's service in WWII, 75 years later

JENN WATT

Editor

Don Ross never met the uncle after whom he is named, but after spending countless hours working on the book *In Defence of Home and Country: The Story of World War II Pilot Donald Alexander Ross*, the Haliburton cottager said he feels like he knows him.

The story of Donald A. Ross, a Canadian pilot who died in the Second World War, was "extraordinary because it's not unique," his nephew said, seated on his dock overlooking Grass Lake. "In other words, there's thousands of stories like that."

And that's why it's important to document, he said. His uncle's decision to enlist with the Royal Canadian Air Force – for which he paid the ultimate price when his plane crashed over Germany in 1944 – was not uncommon.

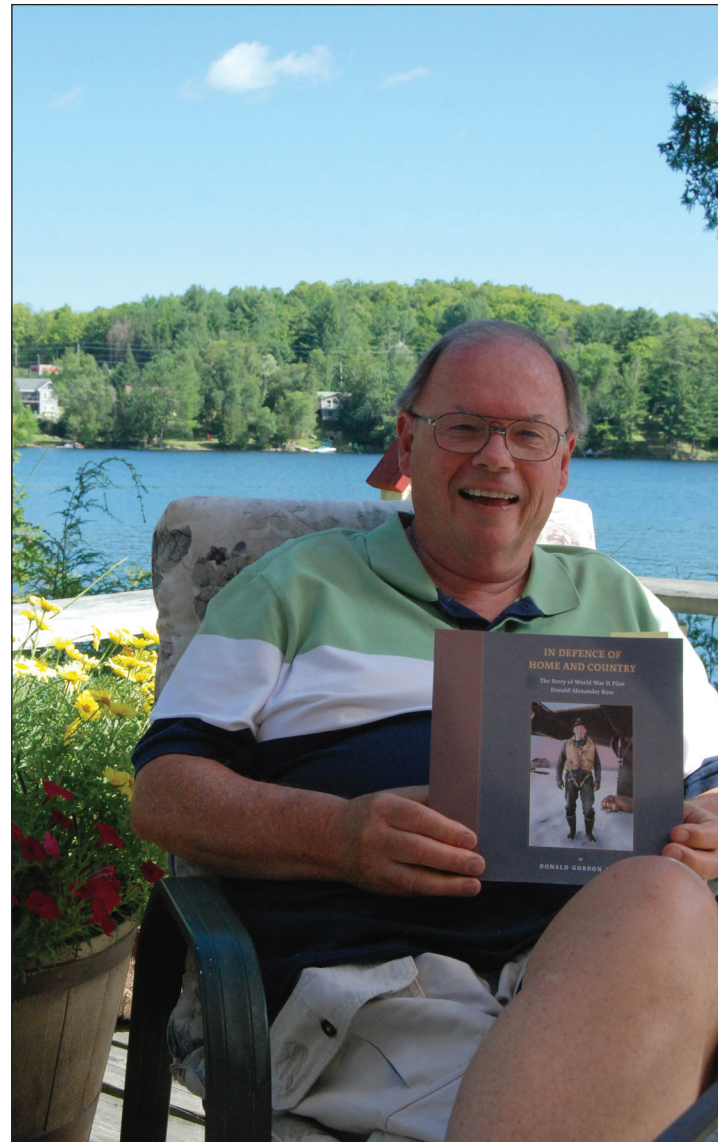
"What I tried to do was illustrate in the book the story – because he was a rather remarkable man, he was an all-round sportsman, he was the eldest sibling – the impact he had in a short period of time. He trained hundreds of pilots to fly, he made a huge contribution before he died at 29," Ross said.

Donald A. Ross of Toronto enlisted with the RCAF in 1940, determined to become a pilot. Because he was colour-blind, he initially wasn't approved to go overseas, but that decision was reversed not long after. "Whether he had finessed a way to clear the way for an overseas posting, we don't know, but clearly he himself reapplied," Ross writes. "Or perhaps the RCAF was desperate for good pilot material and bent the rules. We'll never know!"

In the intervening years, he taught as a flight instructor, with the chief instructor noting him as "an above average pilot ... steady and calm ... Good personality." He instructed for two years in Alberta and Saskatchewan before being posted overseas, arriving in England Feb. 15, 1944.

Flight Lieutenant Ross's story is complicated by the intricacies of human life. He wasn't just an airman, he was also a devoted husband to his high school sweetheart, Kay, and a beloved son in a family with four other siblings, including Don G. Ross's father, Gord. When Flt. Lt. Ross left for England, his wife was four months pregnant with their daughter Beverley. He would never get the opportunity to meet his child.

During his time overseas, Flt. Lt. Ross wrote to his family members, including his brother Gord. It was the discovery of six of those letters that spurred Don G. Ross to begin researching his late uncle, initially with the intention of writing



Haliburton area cottager Don Ross sits on his deck with a copy of his latest book, *In Defence of Home and Country: The Story of World War II Pilot Donald Alexander Ross*, about his uncle with whom he shares a name. His uncle died on a mission over Germany in 1945 and Ross recently decided to chronicle his life for the benefit of future generations and to tell the extraordinary story of an ordinary pilot. /JENN WATT Staff

didn't want to talk about it!"

One of the secrets Flt. Lt. Ross kept from his wife and parents was that he was engaged in operations, instead telling them he was training. The knowledge of his real work was divulged to his brother Gord in letters.

"Please don't mention anything to Kay or Mom about Ops [operations], as to them I'll still be in training ... they might worry," he wrote.

In a letter to Kay in December 1944, when he had already been engaged in ops for nearly a month, he wrote, "I can't see an earthly chance of getting in Ops before the war's end! Just train and wait."

Today, his nephew wonders what effect that secret would have had on his family when news of his death was delivered. They thought their loved one was safely training, unlikely to encounter many dangerous situations. On top of their grief, the shock must have been immense.

"Along with the fact that his remains were never found," Ross said, "so you wonder and his daughter still wonders 75 years later what happened. Might he have survived? Because one crew member did."

Don G. Ross, who previously wrote a memoir about his own life including a harrowing life-threatening illness and lengthy hospitalization, said that collecting information on his uncle and producing a book has been fulfilling on many levels.

"I had some great material to work with, once I identified it. So, it was personally gratifying to write it and have it come out in a way that I was happy with it and that his family in particular was happy with it and [they were] thrilled and most appreciative," he said. "Bev kept saying I can't believe you're doing all this for my dad and for us. I said hey, I'm lovin' it!"

He encourages anyone interested in family history to consider writing it down in a format that can be shared. Writing your own history – and there are memoir courses you can take for assistance – will also be of interest to your friends and family, and potentially future generations.

"I believe everybody has one good book in them, because they can write about their life, their lessons learned, people have been through marriages, divorces, deaths, children, career successes, career failures, illness," he said.

Don Ross has a few copies of his book, *In Defence of Home and Country: The Story of World War II Pilot Donald Alexander Ross*, which you can purchase by getting in touch with the author at dross.manorhill@rogers.com. He also intends on donating copies to the Haliburton County Public Library.

short stories.

"When my mother passed away, in her effects I found six of those old, blue airmail letters that my uncle Don ... that he had written to my father, Gord, when he was overseas," Ross said. "He was a very neat writer and he was very informative. There were six letters and I had the idea that I might be able to write something [like a] sort of short story that would give insight into the life of an airman overseas during the war, from what he did."

He started to talk to his cousin, Bev, Flt. Lt. Ross's daughter, and found that she had been collecting information and artifacts from her father's life.

"The more I started into this, the more I thought, nobody in this family knows about this family member who sacrificed his life for his country. ... I'm going to try to write his life story in a readable fashion that would illustrate what it was like to be an airman, what kind of sacrifices they had to make, what the family had to go through because his plane went down

and he was killed in it on a mission."

Flt. Lt. Ross's Lancaster bomber crashed on March 5, 1945 likely after colliding with an escort fighter aircraft on its way to Chemnitz, Germany. Only the rear gunner survived; he parachuted to the ground where he was captured as a prisoner of war.

Don G. Ross highlighted the brutal nature of war in his passage about his uncle's bombing mission and death: "Bomber Command lost 7,449 bombers and 47,130 aircrew during operations [in the Second World War]. Seventy German cities were devastated by air attacks. Five hundred thousand bombs rained down on Germany and caused between 500-600,000 deaths and destroyed 3.5 million homes. ... Given a choice, many would have refused to kill thousands of innocent women and children by firebombing their homes. But no one gave them that choice. The brutality of strategic bombing was on an impersonal military level. No wonder that many soldiers who survived the war



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Back-to-school decision different for each family

from page 1

grades are optional. Parents can choose between their children attending school in-person, or remote learning.

It's a decision that has parents feeling stressed and reaching out to their social media networks to ask, "what are your plans, what are you doing about school?" For Hurl, like many others, the emotions that come along with making the decision – or not yet deciding – are intense.

"Worried if I'm doing the right thing, sad because this year I won't have a school photo of him or her and she will miss all the fun junior kindergarten milestones – going to class for the first time, her first day of school photo at the school, making new friends."

Hurl is able to be with her kids during the day, because she is at home from work due to being immuno-compromised.

"We have been spending lots of time going back and forth on the choices we have," she said.

Hurl said in-person school poses a risk to her own health by her kids being part of a bigger social bubble than what is currently recommended by the government and public health units, and her family also had to consider how that could impact the people her husband works with – some considered to be vulnerable – at a long-term care facility. Additionally, Hurl's son is on the autism spectrum, and does not like physical contact including that caused by a mask.

"For all of these reasons, we have decided to keep them home with us," said Hurl, who has her early childhood education diploma and is prepared to teach her daughter as she has been, but hopes the school board will continue to supply her son with the tools and technology he needs for remote learning.

"These are questions that most of us have and need answered before choices can and should be made," said Hurl.

While school traditionally begins in September, Michelle Moore is waiting until after the Christmas break to decide whether or not her daughter will attend Grade 8 in person this year.

"I look at it this way, I am not willing to play Russian roulette with my daughter's health," said Moore.

Registration information was sent home to families Aug. 7 by the TLDSB for parents to share their intent for the school year with the board so that schools can better plan for the year knowing how many students will be registered. Re-registration is for all students, including those newly registered, and must be received by Aug. 13. Students who are not re-registered for September will be assumed to be attending at school.

"We understand that it is an immensely challenging decision to take when not all the information is known," reads a post on the ASES Facebook page. "There are no wrong decisions in this case, just the best decisions for your family at this time."

Those decisions look different based on a multitude of complex scenarios.

"The feeling I am getting from some of the parents I have been talking to, they have a mixed bag," said Moore.

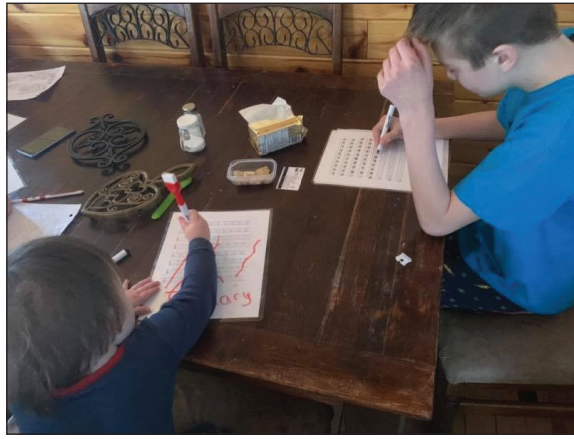
Her daughter enjoyed learning at home in spring, when schools were closed to help flatten the curve during the pandemic and allow the health-care system time to prepare for a possible influx of patients. In June, Sierra achieved A's on her report card, and brought up two of her marks, noting she appreciated the chance to learn independently without distractions from other students.

Moore is joining alongside three other moms, with a total of eight kids, to look at having a tutor teach the kids in groups according to grade so the students keep up with the French immersion program they would typically be enrolled in at J. Douglas Hodgson Elementary School.

"The rest of the studies they can continue like they had for the three months there was no school," said Moore. "I am not comfortable sending her back. Her class has 16 Grade 8 [students]...sorry, the classrooms are not big enough to keep everyone six feet apart. Now Ford said they are going to hire 500 more nurses for the school. There are over 1,000 schools just in Toronto alone. I do not see one going into our little area up here – there are four schools just in Haliburton alone."

Moore said she was concerned with how much time could be spent in the classroom on teaching with added safety concerns and hygiene requirements in place.

"The teachers and the educational assistants are going to be too busy trying to keep the kids apart, washing their hands, bathroom breaks, etc. Is there going to be



Brian, Jackson and Michael Robichaud are learning from home this year, rather than attending school at JDHES and Stuart Baker. /Submitted



Sierra Moore, a Grade 8 student, plans to continue learning from home, and perhaps meeting with a tutor in small groups, rather than returning to school in September. She and her family will reassess that decision at the Christmas break. /Submitted



Landon, who is going into Grade 6 at ASES and Talia Hurl, who would be starting JK in September are opting for home school instead this year, to help keep their family's social bubble small. /Submitted photo

someone in the bathrooms every day for six hours a day cleaning?"

Moore said she was surprised the government didn't opt for a different model, such as a hybrid model or one like Moore's idea in which students are separated into two groups and physically in-class part of the week with Wednesdays off, which she said would give custodians time to clean, teachers time to plan, and would allow for smaller class sizes to maintain social distancing.

"Yes, it's not ideal, however this isn't going to last forever," she said.

"It's so layered," said Jane Isbister, but said it was a quick decision for her and Karen Petinella to enroll their son Rowan in school. "Right now the provincial risk is low and we have some experience of testing and tracking and isolating under our belts. So that's encouraging."

"And although Rowan is very complicated he can't and doesn't put his hands in his mouth, so although he has high risk factors if he gets COVID-19, he might actually be lower risk for contracting it. He is also in a PALS class with a population of 12 to 15 including teacher and EAs, so that's also encouraging."

Isbister said it isn't sustainable "physically, emotionally or financially" to keep Rowan home while she tries to work full-time and care for other kids in the house, too, until the pandemic is one day over or through what she thinks will be rotating lock downs over time.

"So for his social engagement and development I also believe the risk benefit analysis, for us, includes going to school when able."

Busing is on Tracy Jordan's mind. Her daughter is 15 and attends the Adult and Alternate Education Centre in Haliburton.

"I'm not as concerned about sending her back to a school – there aren't as many kids that attend there – as I am about sending her on the bus," said Jordan. "I think as a county we are currently fairly safe, cases have remained low. Sending kids back to school I believe will

have a greater impact on those numbers, especially in the elementary schools."

In Haliburton County, numbers of confirmed COVID-19 cases have remained low among residents – with 15 cases being reported by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit, and at press time, three being unresolved. In Ontario, fewer than 100 new COVID-19 cases were reported over each of seven days last week, with about 40,000 total reported cases this year, about 90 per cent of those listed as recovered.

This spring, Jordan said, AETC students learned over the phone and worked out of booklets, or on specialized projects to suit students' needs and interests.

"This past spring was pretty relaxed for us, as we just spent more time working on her mental health and keeping her busy with fun projects, then transitioned into English and history," she said, noting her daughter is on the same page about not attending class in person just yet.

"For me, the decision hasn't been that difficult, safety first," she said. "She has lots of time to finish her education if she falls behind."

Jordan said she thought the government's return to school plans "are full of holes," and said it was important for people to make their own decisions based on their individual needs, and "go with your gut as a parent."

"I would feel more confident sending her back to school if there was a vaccine, and yes, if the holes – i.e. elementary schools had much smaller class sizes, and social distancing was able to be reached – but I think even at that, it's going to be very difficult to stop the

see SITUATION page 12

Situation stressful for parents

from page 11

spread within any type of school setting, so yeah, vaccine would make me comfortable."

Nicky Robichaud said her children won't be getting the vaccine – one of her kids is allergic to many antibiotics and has had negative reactions to immunizations in the past.

She said she made up her mind months ago that her kids, aged four, six and seven, would not be returning to school this year. Though it's sad to her that one of her children was not able to experience the traditional "clap-out" ceremony as he moved from Stuart Baker to JDHES, and that her JK student won't be able to experience traditional school entry at all, because one of her children has multiple medical conditions, she said her family "cannot risk it."

Robichaud also has a baby at home, and said she plans to homeschool her three school-aged children though it will be challenging. "[It's] a learning curve, due to I have two with learning disabilities and require special equipment, computers, that we have from the school, but I also had to get home internet which is costing me \$150 a month for them to be able to [participate in] school," she said.

The home learning program was stressful for Robichaud she said, and continues to be so as she has struggled in school in

the past, but said she and her husband are feeling confident in their decision. "I think the government is nuts for reopening, especially when we don't have the room to split classrooms in half," she said. "Where are those other half of students going to go, how are you going to keep on top of the cleaning and separation?"

Robichaud said she felt the community has been supportive of each person's decision, and is working together.

Caroline Kooistra said her kids are feeling great about going back to school, and joked that they are "looking forward to going, for once."

She has a 12-year-old student attending JDHES, and a 15-year-old student in Haliburton Highlands Secondary School. Working full-time during the spring while also trying to keep up with the kids' schooling was exhausting for Kooistra, who said she requires some assistance for her one son's learning needs, and doesn't have the means to pay privately. The family has been enjoying their summer, her older son working at Subway and the kids being self-sufficient while she works, spending time at the skate park or in the lake at their house.

Kooistra said she is not concerned about the return to school.

"I believe it's time," she said. "They need routine and we manage daily with the new norm now, so the next step is

school. I welcome it [and] won't put fear into my kids so they manage well ... I feel 100 per cent confident. I believe that this is going to be around for some time and maybe just the first of many pandemics to come – who knows – and their education is also important."

Kooistra said the conversations she sees in some forums can be polarizing.

"I just have a different point of view on the matter but you can't argue it, there's no right or wrong as far as I'm concerned," she said.

Kooistra said those who make the choice to send their kids to school shouldn't be seen as being reckless, echoing a call on social media for parents to support each other through decisions.

"...it's an individual choice. Please don't judge."

Marg Cox, executive director of Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents said it's certainly difficult for parents, or anyone, to know what's best during a time of pandemic, when fear and anxiety can be heightened.

"Parents in the end are the ones that know their children best," she said. "They are also the ones that know themselves best. Families have to make the best choice they can with the information they have access to."

Cox noted that as with any decision, weighing pros and cons is important. "For some families however, the necessity of getting back to work might make it very difficult to choose any other option than sending their children back to school," she said. "Lack of childcare and in-school options have really added to the financial hardship for many fami-

lies. In addition, students have suffered from lack of routine, lack of stimulation, lack of peer interaction. Social isolation has a huge negative impact on the mental health of many. Parents feeling like they are in pressure cookers, juggling working from home, trying to help their children with home schooling and figure out how to navigate grocery shopping plus financial stress on top for many has not been good for most people's mental and physical health."

Cox said school boards are working closely with public health and will do their best to keep students as safe as possible.

"We know that students will quickly adapt to wearing masks and following new protocols," she said. "We also know that for some students they really feel like they need to be there, be with their friends, and that they learn better in a classroom setting. Lack of connectivity and social isolation for some has presented an uneven playing field for school."

"All factors to be considered but at the end of the day, we all have to do what we think is best with the information we have at the time," she said. "It doesn't mean we can't change our minds later or adapt."

For more information regarding re-registering for school and the information about a return-to-school plan thus far, visit: <https://tldsb.ca/return-to-school-re-registration/>.

For parents and caregivers interested in tips, support or help, Point in Time can be reached Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 705-457-5345.

Household Hazardous Waste Day

Saturday, August 15, 2020
9 a.m. to 12 noon
Harcourt Landfill, 1123 Packard Road, Harcourt

Municipality of Dysart et al Landfill user cards must be shown at the gate.

To comply with COVID-19 safety protocols, please remain in your vehicle at the hazardous waste drop off location. Event staff will unload your hazardous waste for you.

Accepted



Not accepted

Industrial waste • Needles, Syringes, Lancets (Sharps) • PCBs • Radioactives • Pathological waste

Dysart's upcoming Household Hazardous Waste Days

Saturday, September 19, 2020 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) at West Guilford Landfill
Subject to change without notice



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Dysart et al

705-457-1740



www.dysartetel.ca



Haliburton & District Lions Club

presents



STORIES IN THE PARK FUN FAIR



Where? Head Lake Park, Haliburton

When? Wednesday, August 26th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

How? Social Distancing all the way; disinfecting every item a child touches before it is used by another child. Safety is our number one priority and our number one commitment to all who participate! All current COVID-19 Phase 3 reopening protocols will be in place!

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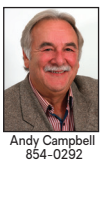
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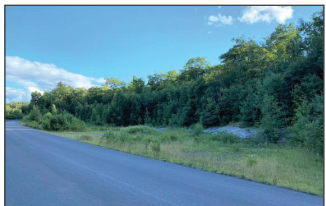
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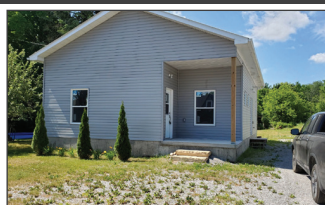
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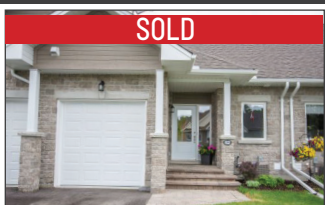
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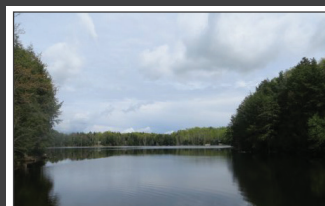
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Corrode

5. Jean Paul __, author

11. Hebrew unit of dry measure

12. A type of scientist

16. Greek goddess of discord

17. For Red Sox MVP

18. It checks your speed

19. Made dirty

24. The First State

25. Lodgings

26. Spiritual leader

27. Bradley Int’l Airport code

28. Native American people

29. Sharp pain

30. Touch

31. Slowly disappears

33. Indigenous Russian people

34. Narrative poem

38. Some are bad

39. Small quill feathers

40. Tattles

43. Popular Easter entree

44. Beneficiary

45. Clothed

49. Payroll firm

50. Lower Normandy’s largest city

51. Binary compound of halogen

53. The Fighting Irish

54. Skilled, paid worker

56. Eyelashes

58. The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet

59. Large, stocky lizard

60. Made poisonous

63. Former US Secretary of State

64. Sticky substances

65. A type of gin

CLUES DOWN

1. To return an echo

2. Displace

3. Japanese religion

4. Predilections

5. Partial

6. Poisonous plant

7. Road open

8. Atomic #81

9. Accomplished American composer

10. Oh, God!

13. Potato state

14. Most melancholic

15. Supportive framework

20. Hollywood’s Pacino

21. A title for women

22. Popular Grammys alternative

23. Check

27. Bolivian river

29. South Dakota

30. Wonderful

31. Supervises flying

32. Commercial

33. More (Spanish)

34. Even distribution of weight

35. “Arabian Nights” hero

36. Compact mass of a substance

37. Bachelor of Laws

38. Halfback

40. Some of it is ground

41. They play in the trenches

42. Atomic #18

44. Chinese Prefecture

45. Fabrics

46. Being in a direct line of descent from an ancestor

47. In slow tempo

48. Flood

50. Long-necked bird

51. Secondary school

52. Artificial intelligence

54. Structure by the water

55. Lather

57. What happens there stays there

61. A bone

62. The Great Lakes State

Answers on page 17



Jean Abernethy, who is in her eighth season helping instruct riders at South Algonquin Trails, said her experiences are used to write and illustrate her books, featuring Fergus the horse./DARREN LUM Staff

Highlands inspire Fergus the horse stories

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

Jean Abernethy’s love of horses and trail guide experiences in the Highlands is the foundation for her cartoon character, Fergus.

Fergus is the title horse character in a series of humorous books written and illustrated by Abernethy, who has spent the last eight horse riding seasons helping instruct riders at Tammy Donaldson’s South Algonquin Trails based in Harcourt.

She said the Fergus comics started as a response to the demand of fans after 10 years of drawing generic horse characters.

“Folks who enjoyed my cartoons seemed to want a singular character. So I invented Fergus. Then he needed support characters for dialogue. The story-telling is just fun! The accumulation of comics led to the books,” she wrote in email.

The Ontario College of Art and Design art graduate grew up on a small family farm located near Lindsay, Ontario where she saw the world from the saddle of her horse.

She has more than 30 years of experience producing comical horse cartoons for equine print publications, and counts more than 300,000 Facebook fans for Fergus, who has up to this point appeared in four published books.

Her work comes from a passion for art and how horses have become entwined with her life.

“I love both the challenge and satisfaction of making a beautiful image, or in the case of the cartoons, an effective image. What I love about horses is ... well ... eve-

rything. Horses have given me a lifestyle and a career. Throughout my life, horses have always been my rudder,” she wrote in an email.

Abernethy, who pursued a college education in equestrian studies at Humber College, has diverse experiences related to horses, whether it was saddle making, working as a barn hand, carriage driver, or as a trail guide.

“Fergus is based upon every horse I’ve ever known. His white face and markings are based loosely on a fine bay gelding whom I had during my high school years,” she said.

Her experience at the Harcourt horse riding operation as a teacher has provided important learning lessons.

“This is my eighth season working at South Algonquin Trails. The past seven seasons have shown me such a wide variety of colourful equine characters. As equestrians, we’re taught from the get-go, to judge horses. When I first came here I judged the horses for what/who they were not. Throughout the seasons, I have learned to appreciate the horses for who they are. I am grateful for the lessons,” she said.

As far as what’s next, Abernethy isn’t sure, leaving it to Fergus.

“Just hold that thought. I’ve asked him where he wants to go next ... at some point I’ll get an answer,” she wrote.

Learn more about the author at www.jeanabernethy.com or about Fergus at his website, www.fergusthehorse.com.

Purchase the book online or locally at Haliburton’s Master’s Bookstore, which can order the book upon request. The store is open to the public with extended summer hours, Monday to Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Treasure hunter of the deep dives for lost items

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

Teenager Dustyn McCready-DeBruin said having a mentor has been key to the success of his fledgling diving retrieval business, Dusty Dives.

The Haliburton Highlands Secondary School graduate of 2019 has been operating for close to two seasons now, offering dock repair, underwater weeding and retrieval of items such as heirlooms, mobile phones, eye glasses and keys.

A lot of what he has learned and continues to learn is owed to his mentor "Pepe" Humberto Lazcano of Adventure Divers based in Omemee, which is west of Peterborough.

He not only taught him how to dive, but has been an ongoing resource, offering diving and business advice since he restarted this season in June.

"It's been huge, yeah. There's been quite a few times if I didn't know [what to do] and if I went down I wouldn't have been able to [search] ... there were probably four or five [items] I wouldn't have been able to find," he said.

This entrepreneurial effort is credited in part to the Peterborough and the Kawartha Business Advisory Centre through the provincial government's Summer Company program, for which students aged 15 to 29 are eligible. The program provided him some training and \$3,000 to start.

When McCready-DeBruin started his company he didn't anticipate the public's demand for his services.

He said the pandemic hasn't hurt his business, as cottagers continue to come up to cottage country. Business is up this year for the 19-year-old, who said he's diving two or three times a week instead of once a week.

His previous experience working with sled dogs as a dog guide the past five years during the winters with his parents' dogsled tour company Winterdance Dogsled Tours of Haliburton has prepared him for the unexpected.

"With dogsledding things just get thrown at you. I feel like if something gets thrown at me underwater it's like I have that mentality that I can keep calm and not panic, which is definitely good in diving," he said.

Having his parents as a constant source of information for running a small business has been a definite bonus, particularly when it comes to the administrative work such as receiving payment and booking clients.

"I knew what to expect. I knew a lot of the behind-the-scenes things that have to happen kind of thing. Whereas that might surprise a lot of people," he said.

Much of his work, he said, has been retrieving mobile phones for clients.

When he started last year he thought he'd be doing more dock repairs and retrieving for golf courses.

This business will become a year-round offering since he is deferring his year of university after it decided to hold virtual classes. He plans to purchase a dry suit to enable him to withstand the colder water temperatures during the winter.

Sometimes his searches depend on technical skills acquired from his mentor to overcome challenges such as the limited visibility of murky water.

"It's hard to see where you've been or where you need to go, right? When you get down there you get disoriented sometimes so it's good to drop a buoy down so you know exactly where you started and kind of do rings around and



Dustyn McCready-DeBruin retrieved this gold coin from a lake in Muskoka. /Submitted

clip a line to your buoy so you know where you've been," he said.

With his work, he's been to a variety of bodies of water from the clear rocky bottom of Kennesis Lake to the murky, black depths of Glamor Lake in Gooderham.

The waters of Ontario typically have less visibility compared to the tropics where it could be close to 100 feet of visibility compared to one foot, he said.

Besides the technical challenges of some dives here, there is also challenges of deep water.

He doesn't love doing the deep water dives where it can be as cold as 30 degrees Fahrenheit in close to 40 feet of water where it might contrast to the 75 degrees Fahrenheit closer to the surface. It's not just uncomfortable to dive, but it also requires more oxygen and leaves him at risk of hypothermia.

Among the tools he relies on to locate lost items are a waterproof metal detector and lights, and a dive computer he wears on his wrist. His computer is connected to his oxygen tank, providing him information about his oxygen level, temperature of the water and its depth, and includes a compass.

He said clients can help him locate items by providing him details such as depth of the body of water, the type of lake bed and three points of location so he can triangulate the location of the item.

Depth is key because it determines if he'll need someone to be on the surface. Typically, if it is below 20 feet he wants either someone with him or on the surface.

Triangulation will improve the success rate for a search.

"That's a huge help because if they don't then a lake is a big place," he said. "Or a GPS coordinate."

Much of his work has been retrieving items off docks, which is a fairly simple search.

He said another detail that helps him is if a person can describe what the conditions of the lake bed are so he can determine the tools he will need.

Metal items, including mobile phones, are much easier to find than plastic objects, as he can employ the use of his metal detector.

One client's request that stands out from the rest is a great-grandmother's gold coin dating back to the 1870s from Holland. The heirloom, he said, was an important find because of its sentimental importance to the owner, the great



Dustyn McCready-DeBruin's tools of his diving trade, from top left: pressure gauge, lift bag for items 60 pounds or less, dive computer (provides information such as water temperature and depth), dive mask with GoPro housing, water proof metal detector, first stage regulator, second stage regulator, and secondary regulator. /DARREN LUM Staff

granddaughter, who had it on a necklace on the dock when it came off after a clasp broke.

"Just the sentimental, right? Most of the things I do are phones and stuff. It's not sentimental. That was really cool

to be able to find that for her," he said, referring to the Muskoka find. "She was ecstatic. She was pretty happy."

For more information about services in Muskoka and Haliburton County provided by Dusty Dives, call 705-457-0486.

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Protocols about safety, club says

from page 17

which included more than 200 curlers, who had paid full rate membership fees last season. The main question posed was whether curlers would be interested or not in curling with COVID-19 safety protocols. Milford said the results indicated more than half would curl. Other questions were related to acceptance of a flat fee and if they would be travelling out of the province in the winter.

More than 90 per cent of those agreeing to curl with protocols said they would accept the flat fee, and the majority would be staying the duration of the winter to curl, which was important because in a typical year the club would only have a third stay.

Even with half of all full rate curlers interested in registering, the board still grappled with the question if it was worth it and produced a model to enable the start of a season, which was presented during a Zoom meeting to all of the curling club. This was followed up with an email to the membership, summarizing the meeting.

"There was nothing at all that indicated that any particular people couldn't curl at our club, but as part of our protocols of what we indicated is that if you curl in our community in terms of Haliburton that's fine, but if you're curling in other communities then we would ask you to not curl in this community because of regional COVID-19 issues and I suspect that is the core of the controversy," he said.

This survey did not include youth curlers or adult curlers, who did not pay for a full rate membership.

Competitive curler Jacob Dobson, who will be skipping the under 18/under 20 team competing on the Junior Curling Tour of Ontario, was also disappointed by the decision and the reasons behind them.

"I believe that this rule affects a small group of people who would even be satisfied with getting a few hours a week just to get out and practice. The rules also make less sense when other members of the club have the opportunity to go out, for example, shopping where they could be exposed to the virus without knowing. Yet we aren't allowed to use the club because we travel to clubs where we have to follow the strict guidelines set out by Curling Canada, CurlON, the Junior Curling Tour of Ontario, and the host club," he said in a text. "The club did not even include us in surveys before making their decision, they did minimal if any research into the competitive side of the game to determine whether we would be higher risk."

Milford said the club was interested in learning about the financial picture of the season through the survey so it only invited members, who had paid the same full rate for the year.

After the survey's results came back there was a meeting for the entire club where everyone was part of the response and plan, he added.

Dobson believes the club could lose a lot of young curl-

ers because of the club's decision to not have a youth program, which includes Tuesday and Thursday for elementary school students and Friday evenings for high school aged curlers.

"I believe this is a poor choice in regards to the expansion of the game. By not running the youth program this year there is a large likelihood there would be curlers who choose not to return to the game as well as losing a year of bringing more curlers into the game. I believe there are effective ways to allow youth to curl while keeping in mind protecting people from COVID-19."

Milford said it's important to remember these decisions are part of an effort to address safety in a landscape that is constantly changing.

When the pandemic is over he welcomes everyone to return.

"We're going to keep everybody as safe as we can in this environment and we think this is the best thing we can do for the community," he said. "And for all our youth curlers, I hope we see you curling at our club. If you feel that it's best for each individual to try and remain competitive and curl elsewhere we understand. There definitely appears to be significant questions about whether or not any form of team curling that is inter-community will happen or not. I think it needs to be resolved by the legislative bodies and the health units, and organizations over the next little while."

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July 8, 1970

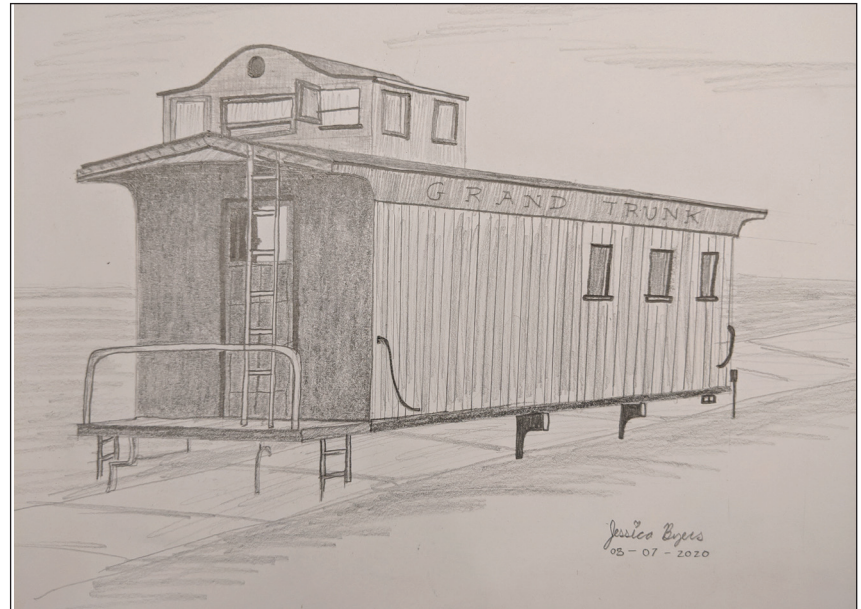
A lot of time has passed since I last wrote in this diary. My nine-year-old self must have forgotten about it, and now in my 40s, I was just going through some old sketchbooks when I stumbled upon it. I have since become a successful artist, happily married my husband, and raised a family here. As I read, it brought me back to when I first moved to Haliburton. Passenger trains came in and out of Haliburton Station regularly full of property buyers looking to cottage here, just like what my family did. Passenger service to Haliburton ended a few years back. The freight trains will stop soon too because as industry declines and highways are improved, traffic along the rail line continues to slow down. My favourite family outing is still going to the Molou Theatre. However, the inner heart of the young girl and artist in me still thinks so highly about the joys of the trains and greeting new people! It's different to imagine that people won't be able to experience that way of life for long.

Until next time Diary...

Come visit the Rails End Gallery to learn more about the evolution of Haliburton Station on our new slideshow presentation in the lobby.

Written by Jessica Byers

Jessica Byers is the summer student at Rails End Gallery. Did you know Rails End has a call for entry to students from Grade 1 to 12 for their online student art exhibition? Find details at www.railsendgallery.com



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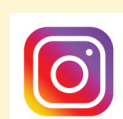
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If you are motivated and enthusiastic, please forward your resume to:

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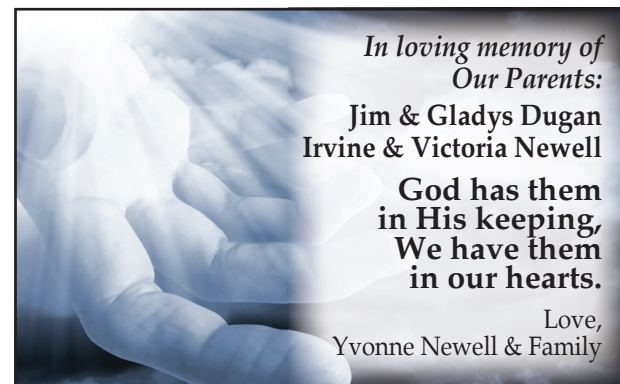
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In loving memory of Our Parents:
Jim & Gladys Dugan Irvine & Victoria Newell

God has them in His keeping, We have them in our hearts.

Love,
Yvonne Newell & Family

650 OBITUARIES

650 OBITUARIES



BEAUDOIN, Andrew

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Andrew Beaudoin in his 82 year.

Andy was born on January 23, 1938 to the late Tony and Alice Beaudoin of Willowdale, Ontario. Andy will be especially missed by his lifelong friend and wife Bonnie, son Mark (Andrea), his three loving grandchildren Trevor, Kieran and Celeste. Andy is predeceased, by his lifelong friend and cousin Alex Clark, Lillian (Toots) and Alymer Cram. Andy is survived by his cousins Ronnie and Maureen Plante of Ottawa.

Andy began his wonderful life by joining the Navy and serving aboard the HMCS St Laurent. During commissioning the HMCS St Laurent escorted the HMY Britannia to Sweden and welcomed aboard the Queen Elizabeth II.

Andy and Bonnie were married September 20 1958 in Halifax NS. After working at a number of positions Andy joined Christie Brown and enjoyed a fulfilling career as an account manager and retired in 1994. Andy and Bonnie took up square dancing and became snowbirds splitting their time between Mesa, Az and Haliburton, ON. Bonnie and Andy enjoyed travelling, visiting such diverse far away places as Belarus and San Francisco. Andy enjoyed past times like wind surfing, sailing and all water sports around the cottage. Andy always had time to talk and enjoy a beer or two with friends and neighbours and especially enjoyed evenings with cherished friends at the lake playing board games or cards.



In loving memory of **Mike Newell (1932 - 2019)**

I hide my tears when I say your name,
but the pain in my heart is still the same.
Although I smile and seem care free,
there is no one who misses you
..... more than me!

Love Always, Yvonne

650 OBITUARIES

650 OBITUARIES



In Loving Memory of

Betty Alice Alberta Hicks (nee Burk)

It is with saddened hearts that we inform you of the passing of our mother, Betty Hicks, she passed away peacefully at the Haliburton Hospital on Thursday, July 30, 2020. In her 90th year.

We thank God for the hope! we rejoice that because of her faith, hope and trust in Jesus that we will see her again!

Beloved wife of the late Gerald Bertram Hicks (2008). Loving mother of Bev (Pat) of Lochlin, Dave (Helen) of Charlotte, N.C., Roger (Kelly) of Stanhope. Cherished G-ma of Jason (deceased), Joel, Rachel, Holly (Kerry) and Emily (Steve). Predeceased by her brother Neil Burk. Lovingly remembered by her family, friends, and also her church family at Northland Faith Church.

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden K0M 2K0 on Thursday, August 6, 2020 from 3:00 until 6:00 pm. **Due to COVID 19 restrictions, All visitors must remain in their vehicles in the Funeral Home Parking Lot until being escorted into the funeral home by funeral home staff and the wearing of masks or facial coverings is mandatory. We appreciate your understanding during these times.** A Private Graveside Interment Service will be held at the Ingoldsby Pioneer Cemetery on Friday, August 7, 2020.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highland Health Services Foundation (HHHSF), to the Northland Faith Church or to a Charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.



www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com



Victor Taran

(Formerly of Lindsay & Toronto, Ontario)



It is with heavy hearts that the family of Victor Taran announces his passing on Thursday August 6, 2020 in his 95th year. A resident of the Sunnybrook Veteran Centre, formerly a resident of Lindsay & WWII Navy Veteran.

He is predeceased by his beloved wife of 65 years, Doris (Roberts), siblings William, Anna, & Alexander. He is lovingly remembered by his children Lynda (Kenneth Shank), Pamela (Ronald Schatochin), & Martyn Taran, grandchildren Kimberley Shank, Kenneth Shank Jr, Joseph Marsolais, great grandchildren Ken Jody Lubinsky, Lily Shank & Christopher Shank, great-great granddaughter Madison Ila Lubinsky. Fondly remembered by his surviving sister Emma DeBiasio, many brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces & nephews.

Private Visitation & Funeral Service

Funeral arrangements are private. Interment Evergreen Cemetery, Haliburton. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Sunnybrook Foundation - Veterans Center would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209.

www.communityfuneralhomes.com

With Heartfelt Sympathy



INSIDE
THIS WEEK:

SILVERSMITH A STAR

Lois Etherington Betteridge's students say
thanks with a special show

LIFE CASTS

New course at School of the Arts has
everyone seeing double

THE FOOD EDITION

Heat up the bbq and find out what's
cooking in this week's County Life

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THE ECHO

HALIBURTON COUNTY

Tuesday, August 6, 2002
Vol. 119 No. 40
\$1 including GST



MARTHA PERKINS/ECHO

Hwy 121 name change gets mixed reviews

KENNETH JACKSON

Staff Reporter

Changing the name of Hwy 121 to Hwy 118 from Haliburton to Paudash is a logical step, says the Ministry of Transportation.

The change will be implemented in May of 2003 and will result in less confusion with tourists, says Bill Charter, assistant district engineer of the MTO in Huntsville.

"Maps will make more sense for the drivers," he says. "It should have been done a long time ago."

Talks have been going on for a year now within the MTO and municipalities that are located on the designated stretch of highway.

"We canvassed all the councils and they were all in agreement with the change," he says.

Highlands East Reeve Keith Tallman says the change doesn't bother him and hasn't heard of any complaints from residents in his district.

"We knew it was going to happen and we spoke with the MTO and I'm not upset with it at all," says Tallman. "However, my only concern is for the business and advertising along the highway, but I guess they have enough time to change or get prepared for it."

Stan's Shell, located just outside of Haliburton on Hwy 121, sings to a different tune.

"It's going to cost us money."

See 911 page 13

Long weekend laughter

Who wasn't having fun on one of the busiest weekends of the year? These young children were taking part in Canning Lake's fun day at Ingoldsby park. We have photos from other lake events throughout this week's Echo.

Golden oldies growing in Haliburton

SHERYL LOUCKS

Staff Reporter

Haliburton County's population is not the oldest per capita in Ontario, but it is close to it.

In a recent release from Statistics Canada, the Haliburton-Kawartha-Pine Ridge Public Health Unit area and the Muskoka-Parry Sound Health Unit are tied with 17.1 per cent of the population aged 65 years and over.

The runner up is Peterborough with 16.9 per cent followed by the Huron Public Health Unit at 16.8 per cent. For those who are curious, the oldest

district is the Yorkton Service Area in Saskatchewan at 22.2 per cent. However, the oldest municipality in Canada is the town of Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island with a median

age of 58.1 years. In Ontario, the oldest municipality is Elliot Lake with a median age of 49.4.

The average percentage of seniors in Ontario public health unit coverage areas is 12.1 per

cent and in Canada 12 per cent.

The 2001 Census has confirmed a truth long known in the service sector that Canada's

See Aging page 13

Mike Myers – where the shagadelic are you?

Mike Myers!

Calling Mike Myers!

Mike, baby (they say "baby" a lot in Hollywood, don't they?). Listen up. We've got an offer you can't refuse.

Lou Consky, the much-loved owner of the Beaver Theatre in Minden and the Molou Theatre

in Haliburton has been in the movie business around here for more than 60 years and he figures that since Austin Powers is a child of the 60s, you and he have a connection. A bond, if you will.

Lou is all excited because he's showing your newest movie,

Austin Powers Goldmember, at both his theatres. He's so excited that he wants you to come and see your movie at one of his theatres. Sort of like a Highlands premiere. Only no red carpet, starlets or Entertainment Tonight.

See Austin Powers page 13

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Otter Lake

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\$979,000



Percy Lake

Custom quality built 3-bdrm, 3 bath. Beautifully landscaped lot w/ 103ft of frontage. South East exposure. Clean, sand and smooth rock shoreline. Open concept living throughout. Finished with honey pine cathedral ceilings in the living room, stone wood burning fireplace and oak flooring. Large kitchen with cherry cabinetry and stainless-steel appliances. 4 season insulated sunroom. Fully finished lower level.

\$899,000

LITTLE GLAMOR LAKE \$580,000



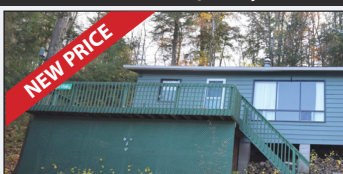
The perfect package! 3 bdrm, 1 bath four season cottage. Many recent upgrades include new insulation in the attic, screened in porch, radiant in-floor heat throughout and much more. Level lot with great privacy at the end of the road. Gradual, sandy entry to the water with fantastic views.

NEGAUNEE LAKE \$529,000



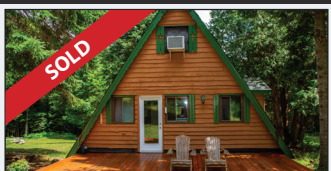
This 3-bdrm, 1 bath cottage plus neighboring vacant waterfront lot are being sold TOGETHER. With a combined total frontage of 306 ft. Double detached insulated garage with studio loft. Level to sloping yard. Bright open concept living Stunning lake views. Bunkie located on the additional vacant waterfront lot. Negaunee is a no motor lake. This package won't last long.

LONG LAKE \$445,000



Choose to build your dream cottage on this stunning property overlooking Long Lake or renovate the existing building which includes 2 BR and 1 full bath. Extensive 650' of water frontage. Private seasonal access and beautifully wooded 54+/- acres provides ample privacy.

BLAIRHAMPTON ROAD \$269,000



Enjoy privacy and relaxation on this 47+ acre parcel. Sweet and simple 2-bdrm, 1 bath "A" frame cabin. Pretty pond right at your back door. Open concept living with pine ceilings throughout. Fully insulated 3 season cottage, with potential to use 4 season. This serene setting and privacy is a must to see!

SUMMERVILLE ROAD \$199,00



Affordable retreat. 2-bdrm, 1 bath cottage situated on a 1.02-acre lot. Just minutes from the town of Gooderham, public beach and boat launch. Cute and cozy living space. Full basement awaits your finishing touch. Level to sloping lot surrounded by mature trees and beautiful views of pond. Being sold "as is."

HAND DRIVE \$99,000



This property is the perfect handyman special. This unfinished cottage sits on a 1.78-acre parcel. Large windows allowing ample natural lighting. Interior awaits your finishing touch. 100 amp service installed. Very private with municipal access to Salerno Lake right across the road. This property is being sold "as is."

VACANT LOTS

Drag Lake \$469,000 7.24AC

Drag Lake \$349,900 3.51AC

West Lake \$349,000 0.60AC

Colborne Lake \$289,000 4.83AC

Paddys Bay \$259,000 45.72AC

Percy Lake \$179,000 0.78AC **SOLD**

North Drive \$74,900 2.11AC

Basshaunt Lake Road \$47,000 2.36 AC

Cattail Road \$45,000 0.86AC

South Drive \$29,500 2.22AC

West Court Place \$29,000 2.43AC

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